DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 208 389 CS 206 170

AUTHOR Dixon, John; Stratta, Leslie
TITLE Achievements in Writing at 16+. Paper 1. Staging Points Reached in Narratives Based on Personal Experience.
SPONS AGENCY Schools Council, London (England).
PUB DATE [80]
NOTE 25p.; Not available in paper copy due to marginal legibility of original document.

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Individual Development; Language Usage; Literature Appreciation; *Models; *Narration; Secondary Education; Student Experience; Teacher Role; *Writing Instruction; *Writing Processes; *Writing Research
IDENTIFIERS Audience Awareness; *Literary Models

ABSTRACT

To determine staging points reached in written narratives based on the personal experience of four secondary school students, researchers examined (1) the kinds of ordering or reordering that occur as the writer imaginatively recovers the events of the past; (2) whether the writer automatically assumes or takes for granted that a reader is already acquainted with the setting, characters, or the narrative events; (3) whether the writer remains largely egocentric, or if there is a more comprehensive perspective developing in which thoughts and feelings of other participants are more fully acknowledged or realized; and (4) the actual or potential understanding of the uses of language that could be pointed to as significant. From the analysis it was determined that the narratives progressed from an oral model through a transitional phase to an early and mature literary model. These stages suggest that for students to be able to convey the subtle nuances of feeling or attitude that intonation and gesture naturally supply, the students should unconsciously assimilate the methods of authors they have read and enjoyed or be led into imaginative and perceptive discussion of these forms of language by their teachers. For teachers to be able to do this, they must be conscious of the range of choices that the literary tradition has made possible. (HOD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED208389

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUC. TION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN WRITING AT 16+

Paper 1. Staging points reached in narratives based on personal experience

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Leslie Stratta

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

John Dixon
Bretton Hall College of Higher Education

Leslie Stratta
Faculty of Education, University of Birmingham

The publication of this pamphlet has been made possible as the result of a grant from Schools Council
160Great Portland Street
London W1N 6LL

CS206170

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Although over the past decade there has been increasing international interest in the development of a student's ability to use language, (1) it has not yet been possible to demonstrate the sort of staging points that given students reach as they achieve greater complexity in language, thought and feeling. However, with the establishment of course work assessment in English at 16+ (GCE/CSE), and the assembly of exemplar folders of writing, there is a new opportunity to study writing development between 14 and 16. At its best, material of this kind will give evidence of a wide range of students making progress in various ways across a range of writing functions. In this exploratory paper, based on a pilot study of exemplar folders produced jointly by the JMB and TWYLREB, (2) we are testing whether it is possible to discern progressive levels of achievement in one specific kind of writing and to build up an analytical description of distinguishing features that together characterise the kind of progress that is implied. At a later stage we hope to be able to move on from this schematic position to a close analysis of individual case studies. (3)

1. Narratives based on personal experience (fictionalised or treated as fact).

Telling stories about ourselves and others is one of the early purposes that we all learn to use extended stretches of language for, and it remains vitally important throughout our lives. (4) For a long time teachers of English have recognised the value of getting this kind of experience into words, first in oral story telling and then, additionally, in writing. It is not surprising, therefore, to find this kind of writing forming a regular component of exemplar folders at 16+. Yet, development in using writing to explore and understand personal experience is very uneven by this age. What different kinds of achievements can be expected, and how can they all be described, from the most elementary to the most complex? In this paper we offer a provisional way of answering these key questions, for discussion, criticism and modification. (5)

We have found in close scrutiny of the texts that the following four questions are central to our argument and effectively form a set of criteria:

(a) What kinds of ordering or re-ordering occur as the writer imaginatively recovers the events of the past? - and to what effect? For example, is the sequence retraced in an elementary way, or are there more complex transformations? Are past events re-organised at any point from a later position, with the benefit of hindsight?...

(b) Is the writer automatically assuming or taking for granted a reader who is already acquainted with the setting, or the characters, or the events? Does s/he implicitly take into account readers without exactly similar experience, and possibly with different attitudes or points of view?

(c) Does the writer remain largely egocentric, or is there a more comprehensive perspective developing in which thoughts and feelings of other participants are more fully acknowledged or realised? (This is a question about the authorial point of view, which may at times be ironically at odds with the "I" of the story.)

(d) What actual or potential understanding of the uses of language could be pointed to as significant? In what ways is the writer beginning

to move from a relatively restricted range of choices (in the use of vocabulary and structure), and to develop a sense of appropriate forms and tacit or conscious rhetorical strategies to evoke more complex textures of experiences?

In answering all four questions we hope to be able to show the set of features in the language which support or validate our judgements. We realise that answers to any one question frequently interlock with the answers to others. Nevertheless, in analysing our examples we shall follow this framework, for the reader's convenience, indicating the focal questions in shorthand form.

2. An elementary example.

The Outcast

I have got a friend and his name is les he comes up to his Grams every week and he works at the Back of the Kelvin flats he is 17 years old we go to the Baths every week and one week we went one Girl kept her eyes on les and I knew it But les didnt after a bit I told him about the Girl and he went red all of a sudden and showing off he started throwing me about in the water and Ducking me after everything he did he looked at the girl so I thought that I should go over and ask the Girl if She would go out with him and She Said yes then I went Back over and asked les I had already to him that she Said yes and he Said he didnt know and went Back in the water and Started Showing off again throwing me in the water he was ducking me and he was Still red and he was Blushing then it was time for me and les to go out, he wasnt reraly Bothered about the Girl So we went home.

* * *

What kinds of ordering? First, a friend is introduced, in very simple fashion - his name, place of work and age. This friend appropriately is the focus of the story that follows. The writer retraces an elementary sequence of events, interpolating only one comment ("I knew it but Les didn't") and two minor interpretations of Les's behaviour ("Started showing off"; "wasn't really bothered").

What sort of readers? Told with animation to a circle of friends the story would certainly raise a laugh - more so if the group knew Les too. The bare reference to "the Kelvin Flats" suggests that such a group is assumed unconsciously. For some adult readers there may be a specific interest in the simple and ingenuous quality of this account of adolescent behaviour, seen through the eyes of a participant. Nevertheless, we believe that most external readers would like to know more, to have the participants and some of the key moments much more fully realised.

How comprehensive a viewpoint? The writer is interested in his friend - indeed the point of the story is Les's response as the girl watches him and as she agrees to go out with him. Although brief, the observation here is pointed and even shrewd. By contrast "the girl" is totally unrealised. As author, his perceptions seem to have gained little from distancing: they may be simply those of himself at the time.

What significant uses of language? The language seems to be almost completely unselfconscious. The focus is on actions, evoked in the simplest of vocabulary and sentence structures. Whenever speech occurs it is reported

as briefly as possible - there is no demonstrable quotation.

There is no evidence that the writer recognises written sentences - in fact, he hasn't assimilated the contrast between capitals and lower case. (Is this related to the absence of any literary echo?)

The one point of elaboration worth mentioning is the quite careful indication of timing ("after a bit", "all of a sudden", "after everything he did...").

In general, then, the writer is drawing on very elementary resources of written language, and within those limitations, he writes entertainingly for an audience that knows him.

3. A further staging point (6)

My First Date

My friend and I were sitting down at the Youth club. We were very bored and were just staring at the pictures on the wall.

All of a sudden my eyes caught two girls who I had not seen before, they were both about John's and my age and were good looking.

Then John gave me a nudge and said, "Have you seen those two girls who have just come in?"
"Yes", I replied.
"Wonder what their names are", I said enquiringly"
"Come on lets find out", was John's answer to that.

John was not very talkative when it came to girls so I could see I was the one who would have to do all the talking on our part. So I started the conversation with the girls by asking them if they wanted a drink, but then I felt a little bit stupid when I saw that they already had drinks. But I pretended not to notice and they replied, "No thanks".

The girls had different coloured hair and one was a little smaller than the other but the both looked the same other wise.

Our first advance on them did not seem to work, so I interupted their conversation once more and asked their names. The taller of the two answered my question.
"My name's Julie and my friend's name is carol, whats your names?"
"My name's Steve and this is John".
Just then the lights in the Youth Club flickered which was the sign that the Youth Club was about to close.

The two girls were just about to leave the the bar, so I asked them if we could walk them home. they both smiled and said "Yes". But as they answered I wondered what I had done, what if they lived miles away, So I quickly said.
"Where do you live?"
Julie answered and said,
"Not far we only live on the Manor".
I felt a bit of relief as it was not too far from where John and I lived.

So we set off from the Youth Club, with the two girls walking in front of us.

Then John asked me which of the girls I liked best, and I replied,
"I like both of them",
John replied.
"Well you are not going out with both of them.
"I wish you would not be so daft", I said,
"What I really mean is that I like both of them but I only want to go out with one of them".

I told John to go and ask them if they would go out with us, When he came back, he said they would and we need not choose between them as they had chosen already. I was to go out with Julie.

As we arrived near their homes we left John and Carol because Julie lived on the next road from Carol.

I stood with Julie outside their house and started talking. I asked her which school she went to and all that.

Julie asked me if I was coming out the following night, and I said that John and I would see them at the Youth Club at about half past seven, Julie said, "I will have to go now", so we kissed and she went in.

I met up with John further up the road and we both agreed it was a night well spent.

* * *

What kinds of ordering? The events are recreated in a sustained and coherent story, stretching well beyond what is usually expected in gossip. The main sequence accurately retraces the chronological order of events, but, in this case, interwoven with the sequence are some of the narrator's thoughts and feelings at the time. These look forward and back, interpreting sections of the action from the narrator's then point of view. Thus, "John was not very talkative when it came to girls" explains the narrator's taking the initiative, while "Our first advance on them did not seem to work" sums up what has just happened, and prompts a new action. (The difficulty with tense suggests that the writer is still learning to master this kind of feature.) As a result the story begins to fall into episodes, sections with their own internal coherence and interpreted significance. It is in keeping with this that the narrator ends with the overall rounding-off comment (then): "we both agreed it was a night well spent". The sentiment may seem rather formal (18th century?) but the intention is clear. Narrative is felt to be not a skeleton of events but significant action ("As they answered I wondered what I had done".) The narrator is beginning to interpret life, as it occurs.

What sort of readers? There are mixed impressions here. An author who refers to "the Youth Club" and "the Manor" seems to be assuming that his reader is familiar with the places intended. On the other hand, he does realise that when the lights flicker he needs to explain that this "was the sign that the Youth Club was about to close".

Similarly when his comments reveal his own gaucheness ("I felt a

little bit stupid when I saw they already had drinks", or "I wondered what I had done, what if they lived miles away"), the reader can't help wondering whether the author (now) isn't a shade amused at what he did then. Nevertheless, overall the external reader would probably like to have had more from the author (as against the participant): a fuller sense of the people involved, the settings, and the interactions.

It's a story that rings true, seems faithful to the events and perhaps unselfconsciously betrays more than the author is aware of.

How comprehensive a viewpoint? Beginning with "My friend and I" is not necessarily a sign of egocentricity, of course: an author may deliberately postpone the characterisation of his personae in such a story, if s/he chooses. However, in this case, there is evidence to suggest that that wasn't the reason. The girls, for instance, "had different coloured hair and one was a little smaller than the other but they both looked the same other wise". Admittedly, he could have been bowled over, incapable of registering detail, but the use of "different" and "the same" betrays an egocentric participant rather than a deliberate author, we would say.

There is further clear evidence of unconscious egocentricity when the pronouns shift without warning: "As we arrived near their homes we left John and Carol". The first "we" is "John and I" (possibly plus the two girls), whereas the second is "Julie and I".

What significant uses of language? Here again there is an interesting mixture. Let's look in more detail at the way the story moves at times, the sequence from the opening of the story to the girls' "no thanks", for example. There is something very elementary about the pattern:

My friend and I	were sitting
We	were very bored, and
we	were just staring...
two girls	not seen before
they	were both about John's and my age and
(they)	were good looking

This is a characteristic use of language. Sections of the narrative are built up of sequences of simple statements such as these; there is one nugget of new information (7) per clause, as if an accretive method was being used to add one simple unit on to the next. Is it an elementary way of maintaining control of the organising, both in terms of the language and in terms of the experience? Maybe this results in the set towards simple chronological ordering of events that we find in this piece - and many others like it.

We have found only one point where the author explicitly shows contemporaneity of events ("as they answered, I wondered what I had done").

The accretive method gives the writing in part the feeling of speech. Yet there are also - by way of contrast - noticeable literary echoes, suggesting a wider repertoire the writer may be learning to draw on:

- said enquiringly
- was John's answer to that
- our first advance on them

Phrases such as these suggest a certain formality of style, an impression supported by the fact that, where we might expect ellipsis, redundant information is retained:

- Just then the lights in the Youth Club flickered, which was the sign that the Youth Club was about to close.

The odd thing is that there is some veering between informal and formal style. For example, ellipsis is in fact nicely used to suggest informal speech:

- Wonder what their names are?

Is this a writer still trying to master the degree of formality and relationship with the reader that he wants to set up in this kind of writing?

Certainly, within the limits that he sets himself, he is a confident handler of the written medium. The sentence is clearly recognised, spelling has been mastered, and detailed quotations from speech are handled with ease. In addition the episodic structure of the story is clearly indicated by paragraphs. (By contrast the first story was seen as one continuous episode.)

In all, are we seeing a writer with limited but developing perceptions about his own experience, using his linguistic resources at full stretch? (The folder helps to answer such a question.)

4. Breaking through to a literary model

TRAPPED

It was the last day of school before easter. Everybody was in a good mood, especially the teachers who didn't shout or tell us to go outside for disrupting the class I don't know why some people were so happy if I'd had the exams coming up I would have been really miserable about doing all that revising in between eating chocolates and easter eggs.

The bell rang and everyone hurried out of school as soon as they could. I met the usual gang outside class 3F and from there we walked down the town to the cafe. I could notice that most people crossed over the road when we walked by or if they couldn't, would look into a shop window.

Inside the cafe we ordered some cokes and made our way over to the table near the juke box.

'Now. What can we do over the next week. everybody think up something' said Bill.

Everybody thought. It was always the same. Nothing to do. No where to go. So we ended up creating havoc.

'Suppose we could go to the pier and play with them machines,' suggested someone.

'No. Y' need too much money. An' I haven't got any. Not till I can pinch some anyway' said Bill.

'I've got it. Y'know that posh house at the corner, near the park. We've always been looking at them apples, but never done anything about them. Now's our chance with the old bag away on holiday.'

'Yeh. That's good', said Jane. Jane and Bill were a pair they were the ringleaders and always got everybody, except themselves into trouble. I didn't like the idea much but I went along with the others.

'We'll meet here tomorrow at around ten. An' don't anyone be late, or else they won't get any fruit,' said Bill.

At a quarter past ten most of us had gathered outside the cafe. A few had dropped out and tomorrow would make up excuses. 'I was working' and 'didn't wake up in time'. That left just six of us.

When we reached the house we found it looked empty, just like Bill told us. All the way around the garden was an eleven foot wall.

'Whose going first Jack you'd better. You're the tallest, then you can pull us all up'.

'But whose goin' to stay here and keep a look out, so if the coppers come they can shout to us,' said Jack.

'Rosemary, you stay 'ere. An' remember, if you see anyone coming just catch our attention'. Rosemary nodded.

With a lot of difficulty Jack climbed over the wall. He fell as he landed and gave a shout.

'You nut. You're supposed to help us up. Sue come 'ere. Put your foot into my hand an' I'll give you a leg up.' I made it up easily, but just sat on the top of the wall looking down. Jack caught hold of me and pulled me down. I landed very uncomfortably on my side.

When all the others were over we walked over to the apple tree. The apples were anormous, and tasted really sweet. I put a couple into my pockets.

'Rosemary, have you got a plastic bag with you', I called.

'Yeh. I have. I'll throw it over'.

I put as many apples as I could into the bag and placed my coat over the top so it did not look so suspicious.

'Look over here. All that gold and silver must of cost a bomb', said Tom quietly, looking into the back of the lady's house. Before I could have time to look in the house Tom had smashed one of the glass doors and was knocking out more glass. He had cut himself pretty badly and had to hold his arm.

'Whose to go inside, Jack, you better, you've got gloves on. Pass the stuff through here and we'll put it into a bag. Get the gold first, then the silver,'said Bill. 'And Rosemary empty the apples out, we've got better things to put in there.'

9

The bag was filled up quickly and my coat was put on top. It was then that I felt sick inside. It had been fun to take the apples, but now it was worse and I was part of it. I could not turn away now.

What we didn't know was that at about the time we climbed over the wall, the lady in the house next door had just woken up and happened to look out of her window upstairs. She had seen us and had let her guard dogs through the hole in the fence.

I screamed 'Look there's a couple of guard dogs. They'll bite us to pieces! Look at their teeth!'

The dogs must have caught someone in the garden before, as they seemed quite expert at rounding us all together. We stood round in a circle together with the two guard dogs around us barking and showing their teeth. If we had moved the dogs would have surely biten us, but we all stood still, frightened by these vicious creatures. We were trapped.

The lady rang up the police and after what seemed ages of waiting they arrived. We were all pushed into the van and taken into the police station. Rosemary had somehow escaped. We all had to make statements, including the women that saw us. And we shall have a court hearing as the case is thought to be quite serious.

My holiday is going to be ruined. My parents ~~made~~ are making me stay in every day and help with the housework. And they say they shall not trust me again.

* * *

A caveat The two examples discussed so far were taken from course work folders and seem to illustrate writers working without examination constraints. "Trapped", however, although appearing in a course work folder, was written, we understand, in timed examination conditions. Thus it may not represent the writer's optimum achievement. On the other hand, it is an interesting piece because it shows someone with a new kind of control - even if she is unable to sustain this throughout.

What kinds of ordering? The main events are organised in a sequence of well-defined episodes, with easy and natural movements from one to the other. This is particularly neat in the movement from the planning session in the café, to the gathering outside it next morning, and on to the house. The economy here is typical of the way an assured story writer selects key moments and elaborates on them, and maintains coherence across gaps in time. The plot also moves swiftly along because the dialogue is used for planning, which gives the reader further information, foreshadowing subsequent events - another sign of assurance.

When contemporaneous events occur, they are introduced with the same assurance "What we didn't know was..." The switch back to the main stream of events - "I screamed" - is again a well-controlled transition, promising a strong focus on the emotional shock. What follows, however, is disappointing. The hindsight comment - "The dogs must have caught someone... before..." - seems to be misplaced; it detaches the reader from the immediacy of thought and feeling. The writer seems to have lost an imaginative grip on the story; the narrator's position fizzles out, and the events are summary - no longer offered from a felt, personal point of view. (This imaginative insecurity had already peeped through with an orchard being

raided at Easter, and an eleven foot wall being scaled "easily" by the narrator!). However, even allowing for our feeling that the writer is under some pressure, particularly at the end, the manuscript indicates that she made an important, conscious decision to switch into present time for the last paragraph. Thus she tries to restore the sense of immediacy and leaves the way open for an ending where the outcome is uncertain. As writers develop, such movements between past and present become powerful rhetorical devices.

What sort of reader? This writer seems to be aware of the need to introduce readers both to the setting and, perhaps more significantly, to the characters. The essential details are quickly sketched in piece by piece, as they are needed, rather than presented en bloc in a separate introduction. The writer is paying the reader the compliment of assuming greater sophistication than the previous two pieces do, for example.

While in general the author-narrator lets other characters speak for themselves, there are significant comments and foreshadowings:

- "So we ended up creating havoc".
- "Jane and Bill were a pair...into trouble".

Some of the comments are much less explicit, suggesting a wry irony:

- "especially the teachers, who didn't shout..."
- "I could notice that most people crossed over the road..."

With all this awareness of reader, it comes as something of a surprise that Tom, who is responsible for the break-in, hasn't emerged earlier as a central character - another piece of evidence suggesting a less than full imaginative realisation of the incident, due either to uncertainty or to examination constraints.

How comprehensive a viewpoint? At several points the writing, having perceptively expressed the feelings of others, allows the narrator a more detached perspective. Among those one notices are the opening feelings in school and, more significantly perhaps, the observation - surely for the reader's benefit? - that "most people crossed over the road when we walked by".

Indirect comments of this kind occur elsewhere too. "Don't be late" is followed by "At a quarter past ten most of us had gathered..." and an ironic reflection on the excuses the others would make up next day.

The narrative creates a sense that Bill has a dominant role, before commenting that he does. The narrator's own position is indicated in delicate asides, and even single words - "but just sat on top of the wall looking down" - until the approaching climax makes her "sick inside". Up to this point the balance between involvement and detachment is very nicely expressed.

However, towards the end the sense of an individual perspective - with all the opportunities it would offer for exploring a moment of panic, fear and confusion - is lost. This is another aspect of the overall loss of control.

What significant uses of language? This is first clear at the sentence level. There is a wide variety in the structuring of sentences and clauses. Thus, when a simple sentence is selected, it has specific effect:

> It was the last day of school before Easter
> (followed by a more complex evocation of mood)
> Everybody thought
> Nothing to do
> Nowhere to go
> (suggesting silence, passivity, boredom...)

What seems to govern the choice of sentences here and elsewhere is the appropriate rhythm and effect - a sign of a mature writer. A second feature is the adept handling of a casual style:

> "No. Y'need too much money. An' I haven't got any".
> "...keep a look out, so if the coppers come they can shout..."

The writer has a good ear for spoken English. Her effects are deliberate; thus the more casual "so if" in Jack's speech is actually substituted in the manuscript for the more formal "in case". Similarly the narrator's style is appropriately casual ("don't", "I'd", "didn't" etc. occur naturally in the narration). Writers who can make this kind of choice have made an important step in using the written medium for varying effects. Perhaps the most important choice in this story lies in the ability to create characters through dialogue. Bill is nicely sketched in the scene in the cafe, and again when there is planning to be done outside the garden. And even the laconic narrator can underline her position: "I was part of it. I could not turn away now" (the use of "not" without elision indicating stress, one assumes).

With such choice and control in the use of language it is appropriate that punctuation should be used with equal care to indicate casual forms, speech or parenthetic comments, and that paragraphing should clearly indicate the shifts in time or mood.

5. Parallels with mature writers

Amsterdam Monday (8)

Monday, a very ordinary looking day in the lives of a party of Geography students on their Easter field course. A morning to be spent discussing the planning problems involved in this capital city of Amsterdam, housing, traffic, development and re-building and plans.

If someone had mentioned violence, it would have been relegated to the recesses of all their minds and they would never believe that they might be involved in the very centre of a violent demonstration, that afternoon of a very ordinary Monday.

As they traipsed through the narrow streets to the planning office, the rain poured down their necks and the wind howled down the canals. The office was a building filled with calm and quiet efficiency, even the hustle and bustle of the town outside was muted. The walls were covered with maps, plans, diagrams and aerial photographs of the city. The main topic of discussion was the new Metro. This was to be a semi-underground

railway which was to run out to the new suburbs of Amsterdam on re-claimed land, running in a caisson. Plans for this development required part of the old centre of the town to be demolished.

The plans were shown to the party and it was explained to them that the area to be demolished consisted of older houses, some dating back to the 18th C which had been used mainly as cheap accommodation for students and older people. Some of the students felt very sympathetic towards the people who had been evicted, there were some real classic Dutch houses among the area to be demolished.

After a lunch in a small café two girls from the party were seated in the smoky cafe peering out at the busy world and wondering how to spend a free afternoon in the pouring rain. Shopping was out of the question as all things in Holland were much too expensive, the only solution left, after discarding all museums and art galleries was to explore the town.

A canal bus took them out of the area of hotels, shops and streets lined with cafés, to an older part of the town. All the old, narrow, cobbled streets were quiet and peaceful at this time of day, only an odd cyclist or two passed them. They wandered aimlessly, admiring the old houses and the hidden churches, until they came to a small canal. The only crossing was an old hump-backed footbridge.

Here on the other side, the houses seemed to possess even more charm, tall and gracious with their crow-stepped gables. Then they realised that all these attractive buildings were empty, but the sound of people was much nearer, and the wind howled the louder for the emptiness of the buildings around them.

As they turned the corner, they came upon the edge of a crowd, instantaneously a flash of memory streaked across both their minds - 'the Metro'.

This was the area which was to be demolished to make way for the new Metro. The demolition men were moving in and sounds of the crowd showed what they thought about the men who would pull down these houses.

The two girls joined the crowd as they surged in the street, thinking they would join in a peaceful stand. They soon discovered their mistake, Police were everywhere trying to barricade the area off to prevent further people joining in, while all the crowd were preventing all the demolition men with their cranes and bulldozers from moving in. The policemen each wore helmets with plexi glass shields and they all carried riot shields and truncheons. Standing across all the main bridges looking like Romans with their shields facing outwards, daring the world.

There were students who were obivously squatting in the houses, and the old people who had lived there and the crowd of people who either did not want these houses pulled down or a metro built, a large number of the supporters were tourists or people like the party of Geography students who thought that they would join in. The police were yelling, "Move along, move along now," or rather the Dutch equivalent, the crowd shouted and screamed but no-one moved.

This was a time, the first for many, when it was a battle of them against the police. The police, no longer human but more like identical scurrying beetles with their shields and helmets snarling to the crowd to

move away, still no-one moved.

The Police were no longer their friends in this insane stand, all this was new and frightening. Up at the front barriers displaying a jumble of words, all meaningless to the two girls who stood in English silence while around them a chant went up, a catching chant, which soon everyone caught, shouting their loudest, clapping their hands and stamping their feet the mad rhythm filling the air.

Police sirens tore through the streets, and camera spot-lights flashed through the gloomy day. The little beeties with their red angry faces scurried worriedly around the cars, while the banners and placards bobbed and ducked in the wind like sails on an angry sea.

Someone heaved one of the loose cobbles lying in the road at a policeman, the crowd shouted and screamed abusing the police, the city office and the planning office and more cobbles were heaved. Sirens screeched across the canal bridge as more reinforcements for the police moved in, escorting several trucks and a crane but the crowd just became a hysterical mass which doubled as the anger rose among them and, cobbles, bricks and any old muck was thrown at these new beetles.

Suddenly a fierce jet of water was fired at the centre of the crowd by the police with a water cannon, the screams rose and although the two girls could not understand Dutch, the hysterical shouts and screams of the mass could be translated into any language. "Panic!"

An old man, one of the many who had been evicted, was standing on the canal side, his white hair almost the same colour as his papery skin, and as the screams rose in a crescendo, one of the girls noticed with a mental detachment belonging to this insane scene, that he crumpled to the ground like a man who has just been shot, and splash signalled his entering his watery grave.

The girl thought without really registering the fact, "he's probably dead." Her screams rose with the rest as cold water shocked her into reality.

"He is dead, he's dead, he's dead, they killed him, they've killed him," her brain went on saying, like a stuck record. "The police are not our friends, they killed him." Nobody noticed what she was saying, everyone was too busy with their own feelings, she was alone in a mass of people.

The police were using their truncheons freely now as they lashed at anyone who came too close, their identical helmets bobbing up and down from behind their shields.

An empty police car, dented by thrown cobbles and bricks, reared into the air onto its top and with a few well placed matches, the car exploded into light. The hysterical mass danced round it, like witches round their bonfire, or savages round a burning sacrifice to a heathen god.

A swipe of the truncheon hit the girl as she moved and blood stained her fair hair, her companion screamed at the policeman who just ducked behind his shield, expecting a flying cobblestone.

A blue maria, deposited some canisters and some of the crowd were taken up, some struggling, some injured. The canisters were man-handled

to groups of policemen who stood in a fence at one end of the mass. The screams of the crowd reached its highest decibel, and a police loudspeaker tried to lecture over the noise, the attempt did not succeed. Each of the policemen donned a gas mask and the canisters were opened.

The wind blew, - the two girls screamed their hearts out as their eyes stung and wept as though they had got soap in their eyes. Totally blinded by the searing pain and agony and everflowing tears, they blundered back through the crowd. Both with their clothes soaked from the water cannon mounted on the maria like a Gatling gun, one with her fair hair steadily going dark red as the rain and the blood mixed together, the other limped painfully. They reached the back of the mass and ran, heedless of their pain, through the narrow alleyway. Without true sense of direction, only panic and trembling fear of what lay behind them, kept them running through the growing darkness and the falling rain that stung their faces and hands.

Somehow, with luck, they arrived panting, bedraggled, almost unrecognisable and half dead from exhaustion at their hotel. They collapsed, their minds still clouded with terror, their eyes still stinging and their voices hushed from shock.

The next day, the sky cleared and the sun shone, a beautiful Spring day, but it would perhaps never make up for that gloomy Monday in Amsterdam, when the rain poured and the wind howled down the canals and a party of students learned that violence was not just something that appeared on the television newsbeat, but was real and frightening and now formed part of everyday life.

* * *

As we shall try to indicate in our discussion, with such a complex piece of writing the answers to one question tend to be integrally related to answers to others. The central characteristic we note is a new kind of density, the complexity of things going on, the need for more organising principles, the combination of distancing with violent involvement, - and thus, language working in such an interacting way that it gives a powerful impression of organic unity. Perhaps this indicates a new plateau in a writer's development?

What kinds of ordering? Three new principles of ordering are introduced. First, in the opening paragraphs two opposing outcomes of the day are foreshadowed, the "ordinary looking" morning and the afternoon's "violent demonstration". This brief prefiguring of the experience is a favourite device of the author. She delicately indicates at key points where (in retrospect) she realises a new episode - even a new kind of experience - is emerging:

> "This was a time, the first for many, when it was a battle of them against the police...all this was new and frightening."

One effect of such foreshadowing is to fill a rather mundane sequence of morning events with ominous meaning. Another is, by distancing and generalising , to maintain a certain detachment in the readers (and writer?) as they enter a violent emotional experience.

The second innovation is the use of contrasting themes: morning and afternoon begin to stand for "ordinary" and "violent":

initially:		later:	
	the party traipsed calm and quiet efficiency of the planning office		the two girls shocked into reality hysterical shouts and screams of the man...the police lashing at anyone who came too close
	quiet and peaceful cobbled streets... houses with their grace and charm		demolition men with their cranes and bulldozers... the police firing their water cannons

The effect of this contrast is to set up an ironic sense of the differences between the calm office planning and the human encounter on the streets: "development" takes on a more ambiguous meaning. (As it happens, this kind of ironic relationship is explored in other pieces in the same folder.)

A third (and related) innovation is the use of atmosphere to evoke a mood linked to the theme:

> "Here on the other side, the houses seemed to possess even more charm... Then they realised that all these attractive buildings were empty, but the sound of people was much nearer, and the wind howled louder for the emptiness of the buildings around them".

The significance of the setting - the internal impression - is registered through implicit comments, which imply elements of absurdity and philistinism in the cool planning.

What sort of readers? There are signs throughout that the author is aware of the story as a construct, and thus of what may need to be communicated. For example, the initial two scenes (planning office and aimless wandering) are sketched quickly and deftly for the reader. As the hysteria and panic develop, the reader is kept in touch with the progressive actions of the police and the crowd, while also focussing in on the two girls as they are caught up into the events.

How comprehensive a viewpoint? The story is told by an impersonal narrator, though the familiarity with authentic detail suggests throughout that personal experience is the basis (as we have noted). The narrator, initially detached, moves steadily closer to the thoughts and feelings of the two girls, while still, remarkably, maintaining a sense of objectivity and overview as "hysterical mass" feelings build up.

It is extraordinary that even in evoking a climax of panic, the writer can achieve a precise reflective observation on the girl's inner state of mind - "a mental detachment belonging to this insane scene". Equally, retrospective awareness is held in check, so that it does not overlay or diminish the force of the authentic feelings experienced (then). One could imagine other writers who would have produced a diatribe against police or crowd, or both - submerging, as they did so, what could be learnt from recovering the actual experience.

What significant uses of language? Right from the start there is a choice of sentence structures appropriate to intention. While announcing the two motifs that will form the basis of the narrative, the writer at the same time places the setting for the action with impressive succinctness: "ordinary looking day...party of Geography students...Easter field course...

planning problems...capital city...". The opening paragraph is built on noun groups: there is no need for a main verb, and one feels that it has been omitted deliberately, not accidentally.

Again and again this writer seems to find with ease the structure she needs. Consider a further example, the one close-up which personalises the plight of individuals - caught in a second's glimpse by one of the girls, but etched just as the feelings of panic have reached a new peak, in reaction to the fierce jet of water:

> "An old man...was standing on the canal side, his white hair almost the same colour as his papery skin, and as the screams rose in crescendo, one of the girls noticed with a mental detachment belonging to this insane scene, that he crumpled to the ground like a man who has just been shot, and splash signalled his entering his watery grave."

There is a continuity, a flow of consciousness from the sensory detail to her mental comment (now) and on back to the visual image, now reinforced figuratively as she sees him crumpling. Moving all together in one elaborated sentence is vital to the effect, we feel: it involves using a complex combination of appositional phrases and further clauses with extended phrases and clauses of manner, each with precise selection of words (evicted, papery skin, crescendo, mental detachment, insane scene, crumpled...).

Here is a writer who is becoming conscious of the uses of language (of its potential freshness and vitality too) and the way in which it gives shape to an experience. Her control and accomplishment are impressive. From her selection of moments in the day, a complex ebb and flow develops in the reader's sympathies, interpretations of the events, and discernment of what is happening to people as the story is built up.

In general, the narrator (now) keeps a controlled perspective on a terrifying experience - an astonishing achievement for a 16-17 year old, and admirable for an adult. The sustaining of the narrator's role, its balance and sympathetic insight, is perhaps the central feature needed to give the story that kind of unity (and conviction) we felt initially.

Questions about progress

The four examples we have discussed were all taken from course work folders, which had been graded by teachers and moderated externally for examination purposes. The actual grades given were, in order, CSE grade 5, CSE grade 3, CEE grade III (equivalent to GCE grade C & CSE grade 1) and GCE grade A. It seems to us that the teachers and moderators were indeed recognising significantly different staging points in written narrative when awarding these grades. What is more, in workshop discussions with a fairly large number of teachers we have already found good agreement on features that distinguish or characterise these four staging points.

Does this mean it is going to be a simple matter now to map individual pupils' progress in written narrative, or will it be much more complex? At the moment we are not sure. There may be more than one mainstream line of development. The next step is to turn to a wider body of narratives based on personal experience and to find whether our examples are typical. The further step will be to look at individual case studies of writers' development over a period of several years. In doing so, we will test and

(we expect) modify an initial hypothesis which we can now sketch out.

A tentative hypothesis

The Oral Model

It seems from narratives such as "The Outcast" that at an elementary staging point the main organising principles rely heavily on spoken models. (9). There are four features particularly that were noted in the spoken narratives of 13-16 year olds collected by Edina Eisikovits, and analysed in her joint paper with John Dixon

(i) a reliance on simple clauses
(ii) connected by an elementary set of conjunctions (and, but, then)
(iii) with almost exclusive use of central verbs (said, went...)
(iv) and a minimum use of "commentry" associated with the main sequence of events (the "plot")

These are common features throughout "The Outcast". It could be, of course, that writers at this stage are severely constrained by their struggles with the written medium and that in their oral stories they are already organising their stories in more sophisticated ways. If so, writing represents a relative regression in their ability to organise stories with a more complex structure. It would be interesting to check whether this is so, or not, specially in the light of Edina Eisikovits' tapes, drawn from "remedial" groups - which seem to suggest that difference lies in the growing lengths of story and the increasing proportion of "commentary".

We note, in addition, that the emphasis in such stories seems to fall on external behaviour, though some "internal" events are beginning to be registered, embryonically. What's more, because of the thinness of commentary, the reader is often left uncertain as to how to interpret important actions (and accompanying feelings, which are generally left very unshaped or inexplicit). Thus, from a teaching point of view, such stories need to be read aloud (as effectively as possible) to bring out potential significance.

In treating this as a script for reading aloud, however, the teacher is left with a fair degree of uncertainty about what interpretation to give. Perhaps in part this is because the action verbs are so basic: "kept her eyes on... I knew it... Les didn't - there's no hint here to suggest amusement, irony, knowingness, or any of the effects one could easily bring out in a dramatic rendering. (This suggests a line for later development.) So to tell this story well, one has to fill out its significance imaginatively, and because it is in an oral tradition a good reader won't find that too difficult. There are powerful dramatic possibilities well beyond the simplicity of the text.

Equally, stories as simple as this need to be read with care: we know from earlier literary texts (notably the Bible) and from modern authors who deliberately choose this model, that it is capable of a wide range of narrative effects. In a story like "The Good Samaritan", for instance, the clauses are elementary, but the structure of the story implies a more comprehensive perspective on the people and the events. Writers who realise such possibilities are at a later stage of development than our first student.

Perhaps the first question for us as teachers is whether this writer is able to do more, if we look at other stories he has produced. If not, how can we help him to produce stories with a wider significance for himself and his listeners? The discussion of the next three staging points may suggest some lines of direction.

A Transitional Phase?

There are many features of the oral model still present in "My First Date", as we showed in an earlier analysis: simple clauses, an elementary set of conjunctions, many central verbs. Nevertheless, at least three changes of importance have occurred:

(i) Paragraphing has emerged because the writer is shaping the story into episodes, each marking a new step in the action.

(ii) Forward and backward-looking commentary by the narrator is beginning to interpret the main actions.

(iii) Speech is beginning to take an important role in the story, and to be rendered reasonably faithfully.

If the writer of "The Outcast" was struggling with the written medium, this writer seems to be much more at ease and able to write extensively - despite the heavier demands of paragraphing and speech punctuation. He is beginning to convey some actions a little more delicately: "John gave me a nudge and said... I said enquiringly... I interrupted their conversation once more and asked... I quickly said." These are the kind of cues that were missing in "The Outcast" and which help to round out a dramatic reading. Equally, other features such as comments from the narrator ("I could see I was the one...I felt a bit of relief...") begin to suggest something of his personality.

Of course, these changes could well develop within the spoken model. Are there any signs that the writer is aware of other models? The way the episodes are marked, step by step, seems to suggest an acquaintance with simple literary forms:

All of a sudden
So I started the conversation
Our first advance on them did not...
The two girls were just about to leave...
So we set off...
As we arrived...

This effect is reinforced by the way the steps are laid out as paragraphs on the page. However, the transition is still an elementary one.

The tendency at times to move into a rather formal style is further evidence, in our view, that the writer is moving away from a strictly oral model. We have already mentioned a number of phrases that give this impression: they suggest an uneasy tension between a basic oral model and a developing feel for a literary model. Is this a characteristic problem for a developing writer who is less than steeped in literary forms? If so, this may often result - as here - in awkward turns of phrase that detract from the authenticity of the piece. However, there are also signs that at appropriate moments a more casual style is being mastered, as we have already pointed out.

The other two features we have drawn attention to (commentary forward and backward, and speech) belong equally to an oral and literary tradition. The development they point to lies in the complexity of the story's significance, and the way the writer is able to use these features to present and interpret it. They seem to work in complementary directions. Reflective glances, and glances ahead, open the way for more complex interpretation of the events, and it is significant that this writer has only begun the process. Extensive use of speech, on the other hand, helps to develop and round out the characters, to present them dramatically and directly, rather than interpret them. Each of these features can develop independently, or both may develop together.

Writers who are in transition from oral to literary models are almost bound to veer between one and the other. So there is an unevenness of tone, which teachers have remarked on. Nevertheless, we would expect to find a large group of students in this transitional phase, when writing narratives, even at the age of 16. For teachers the problem seems to be how to assist the fundamental transition, rather than merely comment on surface infelicities.

The Literary Model: an early phase

Perhaps the most striking change is the relative rarity of conjunctions like and, but or then, and the rarity of simple clauses, other than in speech. The building blocks of the oral model have now been discarded. What replaces them is a range of choices. So when simple sentences are used, they are deliberately chosen to suggest, for example, laconic speech or inertia.

"Everybody thought. It was always the same. Nothing to do."

The writer even eliminates the verb, and gains an effect by this choice. The model incorporates;

(i) a choice from a variety of simple and complex sentences

(ii) a choice whether to use conjunctions to suggest certain effects (flow or continuity of action), or to omit them in order to imply other effects;

(iii) some variation on the central verb;

(iv) the development of dialogue -rather than commentary in this case - and especially as an indication of character and in furthering the action

In effect, this new range of choices enables the writer to evoke, through a delicate range of rhythmic variation, more complex shifts in mood than we have seen in the earlier pieces. The first five paragraphs, if they are read aloud, quickly establish the new importance of rhythm and confirm that these effects are central to the writer's intention. There is a movement from cheerful bustle (from which the narrator stands rather aloft) to the boredom in the cafe.

These rhythmic effects are achieved both within the narrative and within the dialogue. At the opening, the writer is more expansive; thus the clauses are longer and more complex. As the story gathers pace, the effect is achieved partly by the dialogue, which is staccato at key moments-

"No. I need too much money..."

"I've got it..."

"Yeh. That's good."

- and partly by the deft way in which the writer selects, prunes and juxtaposes her paragraphs,

"We'll meet here tomorrow at around ten...
At a quarter past ten most of us had gathered
When we reached the house...
"Whose going first? Jack you'd better..."

The way these four paragraphs have been put together, with a minimum of connecting links and conjunctions, nevertheless establishes the passing of time and the shift of place, and makes an ironic comment on the fact that they are late and that not all turn up, despite Bill's injunction: "An' don't anyone be late."

In context, and compared with the opening, the economy of these brief paragraphs suggests a new staging point in writing.

As a result, when we reach the climax, our expectations as readers are high. However, here - it seems to us - both the rhythms and the imaginative grasp of the story are less sure.

In this story the writer chooses to use dialogue to sketch in character and to further the action. What kinds of problem does this pose for her? She needs a naturalistic style to make the close-knit gang convincing to the reader. She has to suggest the personality of the dominant character.

Bill's role is clear from the start:

"Now. What can we do over the next week, everybody think up something."

His attitudes are quickly sketched in:

"Not till I can pinch some anyway... Now's our chance with the old bag away."

Bill constantly takes the lead in the planning. He is the one who gives instructions throughout the first part of their escapade, and these are clipped and to the point. Indeed, when another character - Tom, who has not been introduced earlier - makes the crucial suggestion that they break into the house, it hardly rings true.

Bill's character is realised mainly through dialogue. But the other central character, the narrator, is evoked by a different method. From the start she is more delicately realised. She is aware of the way others react to the gang:

"I could notice that most people crossed over the road..or
...would look into a shop window."

It's interesting that she specifically makes this a conscious observation, rather than the simple report that "Most people crossed over..." More implicitly, when she is given a leg-up, the reader is made to feel that she is not perhaps wholeheartedly wanting to "go along".

"I made it up easily, but just sat on top of the wall looking down."

It's also interesting to note how at this moment she is able to use a simple conjunction - "but just" - subtley to suggest her mental uneasiness. In addition, as we have already indicated, she conveys an ironic distancing from Bill and the gang in her comments (implicit and explicit) on their response to his instruction to meet at ten.

Readers will notice that this piece is longer than the first two - and our final example is longer still. While we don't want to regress into the naive notion that length is the main feature of development in writing, we do consider that the length of each of these pieces is not accidental. In order to explore in a narrative features such as characters and their interplay, or a changing sequence of moods, or a dramatic build-up to a climax, or more than one perspective on an event (and to do so in increasingly complex ways), writers will tend to produce more as they become more accomplished.

Towards a mature literary model

What's begun in the third stage is extended with increasing complexity and control in the fourth. There are several key features we can point to: the pattern of events, the emotional responses, the social perspective, the rhetorical choices...

In our earlier analysis we drew attention to the dense web of inter-relationships between the events of "Amsterdam Monday". As readers perceive these complex relations they are drawn into a deeper understanding of the felt meaning of the experience for the participants. This complexity is not a matter then of sheer sophistication or the exhibiting of expertise: it evokes a sense of shock not too dissimilar from that of "Trapped", but offers more penetrating insights.

Equally, emotional responses are explored more fully and more delicately as shifts of mood occur and the action moves forward to a climax. What's impressive is the effort not only to explore the feelings of the central participants, but imaginatively to realise the feelings of the crowd at particular moments in the action.

The narrator, in taking a more comprehensive point of view and entering into the feelings of different groups, also achieves a broader social perspective, so that the reactions of the various participants are viewed from an independent and somewhat more objective standpoint.

All three of these effects can only be realised by a writer with a refined sense of the appropriate choice of word, sentence or paragraph structure. To that degree, more delicate and exact impressions can be evoked, as we have tried to show earlier.

Indeed, despite the writer's youth there are obvious parallels with a good deal of published autobiography or documentary reporting. So at this point we feel there is no need to pursue or seek to define further staging points. The central question becomes, what is the quality of vision within the story?

When one is reading with this kind of expectation, there may be slight misgivings about one aspect of "Amsterdam Monday", the tendency to over-

write, to focus on the language at the expense of the imaginative experience. Such a comment would be out of place with the earlier writers, perhaps, and is a tribute to the maturity of this writer.

From spoken to written: the teacher's understanding of development

As children move from speech to writing they inevitably lose the powerful expressive effects of voice, facial expressions and gesture. Without the aid of these additional symbolic forms their texts normally appear flat and lacking in indications of attitude, emotion or mood. This is a problem that faces all writers. How can they use lexis and syntax alone, to convey all the subtle nuances in implication, feeling or attitude that intonation and gesture naturally supply? This is one of the questions that a literary tradition has to help to answer.

As they write personal and imaginative stories there are perhaps two main ways in which children learn to cope with this problem. First, they unconsciously assimilate the methods of authors they have read and enjoyed. Second, they can become more consciously aware of the choices available, as they are led into imaginative and perceptive discussion of these forms of language by their teachers.

To illustrate this, if we turn back to "The Outcast" there are several points, as we have said, where the reader is left uncertain what interpretation to give. This affects the whole significance of the story - the feelings, relationships and attitudes. For instance, what is the reader to make of the concluding statement?-

"he wasn't reraly bothered about the girl so we went home".

Is the writer intending to convey an amused knowingness? - a casual nonchalance? - a flat matter-of-factness? We can't know; there are no indications in the written text to throw light on this ambiguity. In contrast, as we mentioned in discussing "Trapped", at crucial moments the writer has found ways to indicate feeling or attitude (implicitly and explicitly).

As a result, her story takes on a deeper significance. It is not merely an external narrative of being "trapped" in the garden, to the act of theft; it is also an expression of feeling trapped into a set of actions one is increasingly unhappy to "go along with".

It is this kind of insight and reflective awareness of experience that teachers of English hope to encourage in narratives based on personal or imagined experiences. At their best, such narratives are reaching towards mature literature. The first question is, how aware are teachers of the developing choices in language that are needed if writing is to become as expressive in its own right as speech? In order to convey more complex feelings, attitudes and evaluations pupils need encouragement to learn how to select the appropriate phrase, inner commentary or structuring of the story. Simply to recognise where they have succeeded, teachers have to be conscious of the range of choices that the literary tradition - at its best - has made possible. At present we feel this consciousness is often lacking, or it is piecemeal and without overview.

It is true that there is a distaste for a certain kind of rhetorical analysis, associated with clumsy attempts to inculcate "devices" and "skills", with no relationship to intuitive or developing perceptions of the writer. This has certainly led in the past to a divorce between form and experience.

Nevertheless, without an awareness of rhetorical choices, (10) teachers have no internal guidelines for their own perceptions - not to mention ruling out the possibility of direct and tactful comments, encouraging their pupils to recognise what important choices are available.

The second question, then, is whether in the course of reading literature, pupils can learn to enjoy and appreciate the new ways their author is using language to convey his felt perceptions, by a wide variety of forms within the written language. Instead of "hunting the metaphor", perhaps the class should be savouring the exact ways whereby the writer's phrase, sentence or wider structuring reveals the deeper meaning of the story? If so, teachers need at the back of their minds a much more clearly defined understanding of the forms mature writers are actually using.

Summing up the current stage in the research

We are assuming that the criteria may need clarification or amendment in the light of further work and constructive criticism. Our next interest is to apply these, and perhaps further, criteria to other kinds of narrative, especially those based on personal imagination (possibly with the aid and stimulus of documentary material or fictional models). We shall also be preparing a paper on writing for other purposes, such as argument, and proposing a rather different, though related, set of criteria that appear to be needed.

In these initial papers our discussion is deliberately detailed, extensive, heuristic and tentative. We are reporting an enquiry and inviting colleagues to join in that process, not summing up a final position. Nevertheless, we hope that some teachers and examiners will already find ideas that are of direct relevance to them, even at this stage.

We intend shortly to set up two small seminar groups with teachers and examiners in the Birmingham and Yorkshire regions who are interested in jointly drawing up more detailed sets of staging points, in a range of different kinds of writing - as potential guides to teaching, learning and assessment (including self-assessment). Meanwhile, we would welcome comments on both the criteria and the distinguishing features we have drawn attention to in this paper.

References

1. We have found the work of fellow researchers especially useful: Andrew Wilkinson (see 5 below); James Britton et al The Development of Writing Abilities 11-18 (Macmillan 1975); James Moffett Teaching The Universe of Discourse (Houghton Mifflin 1968); James L. Kinneavy A Theory of Discourse (Prentice-Hall 1972); Bruce Bennett Unpublished work from Western Australia.

2. We are grateful to the Joint Matriculation Board and the West Yorkshire and Lindsey Regional Examinations Board for making these exemplar folders available.

3. Our current research in "Standards and Achievements in Writing at 16+" has been supported by a grant from Schools Council, to whom we are also grateful for the active interest they have taken. We have had further valuable support from the C.E.E. Committee of the Steering Committee of Standing Conference in joint work with their chief examiners, as part of a cross moderation enquiry into standards across a range of different kinds of writing. We hope that a paper will also be published on this in due course.

4. See especially D.W.Harding "Psychological Processes in the Reading of Fiction" (in British Journal of Aesthetics Vol 2, No.2, 1962) and Barbara Hardy Tellers & Listeners (Athlone Press 1976).

5. As we have elaborated these categories after intensive study of the course work folders over the last year, we have discovered that we have been working very much in parallel with our friend and co-author, Andrew Wilkinson. While we may diverge in detail, his recently published work Assessing Language Development (Oxford University Press 1980), which focuses on the age range 7 to 13, has been a great encouragement to us.

6. The notions of "staging points", with its suggestion of something more dynamic than "stage" we owe to Irene Farmer and Angela Williams, colleagues at the Language Development Unit at Bretton Hall College of Higher Education, Bretton, Yorkshire.

7. "New Information" is adopted from Randolph Quirk et al. Grammar of Contemporary English (Longman 1972)

8. This very interesting narrative appears from internal evidence to be based on direct personal experience; if it is not, it offers a perfect example of a kind of story in which the writer draws so effectively on documentary and imaginative resources that the distinction between it and a directly personal story is immaterial.

9. See the discussion in Dixon and Eisikovits (Unpublished paper 1980)

10. See for example James Moffett Points of View (Mentor Books 1966) and Wayne Booth The Rhetoric of Fiction (University of Chicago 1961)